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CALFED
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Subject: Alternatives Affecting the Transmission Agency of Northern California's
Waterfowl Mitigation Measures

This letter is in regards to several water conveyance alternatives being considered in the CALFED Bay-Delta Programmatic Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (PEIR/EIS). Various alternative scenarios were described in the Status Report for Technical Studies for the Storage and Conveyance Refinement Process, which was released for the March 20, 1997, public workshop. As described in the Status Report, Alternatives 2C, 2D, 2E, and 3H would directly impact an on-going waterfowl and wetland mitigation project that is being sponsored by the Transmission Agency of Northern California (TANC) in coordination with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the California Department of Fish and Game (CDF&G).

The Solar, Wind, and Geothermal Power Production Incentives Act of 1990 (P.L. 101-575, Section 6) required that TANC mitigate for potential impacts to waterfowl from the construction and operation of the California-Oregon Transmission Project (COTP), a 340-mile 500-kV transmission line extending from southern Oregon to Tracy, California. TANC is the Project-Manager for the COTP and the largest participant in the joint action project. Mitigation is required for the potential loss of waterfowl associated with collisions with the COTP transmission line and the potential loss of habitat under and adjacent to the transmission line. To meet these requirements, TANC acquired mitigation land on the Palm Tract (Attachments 1 and 2) in eastern Contra Costa County in 1993.

In accordance with an April 1993 Interagency Agreement with the CDFG and the USFWS, a Waterfowl Habitat Management Plan (WHMP) was approved for the site. As part of the Interagency Agreement, TANC has been very active in managing and monitoring waterfowl production since 1993 to meet the requirements of the WHMP. This work includes a continual process of improving the habitat and management

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techniques. TANC continues to make positive progress towards meeting the WHMP goals and expects to do so within the time frame established by the WHMP.

Also as part of the WHMP, three brood ponds were established on the east side of the Palm Tract property bordering Old River. Alternative 2C of the PEIR/EIS creates an isolated channel through the brood ponds. Alternatives 2D, 2E, and 3H move the levees of Palm Tract behind the brood ponds, making them part of the river. If any of the alternatives are adopted, the considerable efforts by TANC, USFWS, and CDF&G to design, create and manage this waterfowl and wetland mitigation project would be destroyed, and the benefit to waterfowl in the delta from this project would be lost.

TANC's interests would be directly affected by the alternatives described in the PEIR/EIS. TANC requests that it be included in any CALFED mailings and notices of meetings that involve these alternatives and be provided with appropriate notice to allow for active participation in the alternative analysis should that be in TANC's interest.

Sincerely,



Keith G. Johnson

Enclosure